

**MELANAGROMYZA AZAWII SPENCER (AGROMYZIDAE: DIPTERA)  
AS A PEST OF SESAMUM**

Sesamum (*Sesamum indicum* L.) is grown as a catch crop in paddy fields during summer season in the sandy-loam tracts of Kerala State. During 1976, a large number of sesamum plants at the Rice Research Station, Kayamkulam were found to dry up in patches due to infestation by the maggots of *Melanagromyza azwii* Spencer.

The yellowish-white maggots feed on the internal tissues of the stem causing wilting of the plants. In young seedlings, the maggots tunnel the central core of the shoot from top to bottom, as a result of which the plant droops and dries up. In older plants, the maggots enter the stem from the axils of tender leaves, girdle the stem beneath the cortical layers and reach the basal portions. Breaking of the shoot top and drying up of the severed top portion are the usual symptoms of attack. The adult fly is bluish-black in colour and measures about 2.1 mm in length. The female flies lay eggs singly on the axils of tender leaves on the top. The egg hatches within a week and the tiny maggot eats its way forming a tunnel. They attain maturity in 20 days. Pupation is either in the tunnel in or soil. The pupal period is on an average 6 days.

Abraham *et al.* (1973) recorded the occurrence of *M. obtusa* M. on sesamum in Coimbatore. This is the first report of *M. azwii* on sesamum.

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സംഗ്രഹം

എളുപ്പ് ചെടികളുടെ ഇളം തണ്ടുകളും കൃമ്പും തുരന്ന് കേടുവരുത്തുന്ന മലമ്പര ശ്രോമൈസാ അസാവി എന്ന പ്രാണികൾ ഇന്ത്യയിൽ ഇടപ്രഥമായി കേരളത്തിൽനിന്നും റിപ്പോർട്ട് ചെയ്തിരിക്കുന്നു.

Reference

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